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## **CT Humanities Awards \$35,574 in Quick Grants to 8 Cultural Nonprofits for Humanities Programs**

MIDDLETOWN – At their April meeting, the board of directors of CT Humanities (CTH) awarded \$35,574 in humanities project grants from the CT Humanities fund.

Funding will support a broad range of humanities programs including a video tour memorializing Bridgeport hero, Cesar Batalla; post-film Q & A panels at screenings of *Dawnland* and *Bounty*, two Upstander films about the treatment of Native peoples in New England; a fall lecture series on prominent 19<sup>th</sup>-century Black figures, Ann Plato, James Pennington, and James Mars; the first-ever Juneteenth celebration in Hebron; a video series about Chinese immigration history in North America (in English and Chinese); humanities-based LGBTQ+ oriented events; an exhibit on sustainable fashion history; and workshops on how to use humor to make sense of current events and social issues.

The 8 organizations awarded Quick Grants in April are:

**[Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District](#) (Bridgeport, \$4,999), *Jane + Cesar's Way - A Virtual and Real Tour of Downtown Bridgeport*, **[Stanley-Whitman House](#)** (Farmington, \$4,985), *Upstander Films at Stanley-Whitman House*, **[The Connecticut Democracy Center](#)** (Hartford, \$4,140), *Hartford History Lecture Series 2022*, **[Hebron Coalition on Diversity and Equity \(CoDE\)](#)** (Hebron, \$3,556), *Juneteenth Celebration*, **[North American Maple Cultural Center](#)** (Mansfield, \$4,996), *100 Years Chinese Immigration History in North America*, **[New Haven Pride Center](#)** (New Haven, \$4,999), *2022 LGBTQ+ Arts, Culture, & Humanities Programming*, **[Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum](#)** (Norwalk, \$4,999), *Making It Last: Sustainable Fashion in 19th Century America*, **[Southington Public Library](#)** (Southington, \$2,900), *The Literacy of Laughter: A Community Gets Schooled in the Art of Comedy*.**

The Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District (DSSD) will use the funding to create a companion neighborhood tour video to their *Jane + Cesar's Way* event. The video tour allows more participants to connect with the neighborhood and creates a lasting memory of Cesar Batalla's impact on the city. Batalla's three decades of activism and energy made him a significant figure in the political, ethnic, and community life of Bridgeport.

"With this funding for our *Jane & Cesar's Way* film celebrating the life of Cesar Batalla, we will simultaneously introduce new generations of Bridgeporters to a man who embodied the spirit of community-led city building, help residents recognize their power as influencers in

how their city functions, and acknowledge the dynamic individuals continuing his work,” explains **Lauren Coakley Vincent, President + CEO, Bridgeport DSSD**. “Without this funding, we would not have the capacity to create this lasting memorial to Cesar Batalla’s legacy,” continues Vincent. “It’s truly a gift to be able to carry this message at a critical moment in the city’s history.”

First-time applicant, Hebron Coalition on Diversity and Equity (CoDE) will use their grant to bring together a Juneteenth Celebration on June 18, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the historic Peters House in Hebron. The event is in collaboration with Hebron Day, RHAM High School, Douglas Library, and ShopBlackCT. Celebrating African American culture, the program offers a variety of interactive educational experiences for children, youth, and adults.

“This funding will enable us to provide an informative, meaningful, and moving Juneteenth Celebration – the first-ever for Hebron. It will help us to continue to educate, enlighten and inspire people to action,” says **Donna Jolly, Co-chair, Hebron Coalition on Diversity and Equity (CoDE)**.

Participants can explore the path to freedom for all African Americans, including Hebron's efforts to free an enslaved couple. “As a relatively new, but passionate and focused community group committed to creating a diverse, equitable, and vibrant community, the Hebron Coalition on Diversity and Equity (CoDE) is deeply grateful to CT Humanities for this grant,” adds Jolly.

A first-time grantee with CTH, the North American Maple Culture Center (NAMCC) in Storrs works to promote Chinese American immigration history. In collaboration with Dr. Jason Chang, associate professor of History and Asian American Studies at UConn, NAMCC will use their Quick Grant funds to create exhibitions and programs that connect individuals to the center’s extensive research on Chinese immigration history in North America. A series of YouTube videos to supplement history education is also planned.

**Lin Tong, office manager at NAMCC** explains, “we couldn't have done this level of quality work and gotten so many people to know about our work on *100 Years of Chinese American Immigration History in North America*. We are honored to get connections in the field of US minority history through CT Humanities recommendations.”

New Haven Pride Center’s Quick Grant will fund key programs that are part of their LGBTQ+ Arts, Culture, & Humanities Programming including: Day of Action: Racial Justice in the LGBTQ+ Community, Panels & Conversations, and the Lavender Lit Book Series highlighting LGBTQ+ non-men writers. These humanities-based LGBTQ+ oriented events feature educational, community-building humanities programs tailored for a broad audience on important topics in our community.

"The New Haven Pride Center applauds CT Humanities for their continued investment in Connecticut's LGBTQ+ arts, culture, and humanities sector. Their long-standing dedication to elevating all of the voices of Connecticut, particularly underrepresented communities, is more vital than ever, especially in the wake of anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment that is sweeping our nation and our state. The New Haven Pride Center is humbled to be one of the shepherds in partnership with CT Humanities in this work," says **Patrick Dunn, Executive Director, New Haven Pride Center**.

As "costume dramas" and eco-fashion pique interest among consumers and fashion producers, Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum (LMMM) will use their funding to explore 19th-century "hand me down/use it up" practice through a new exhibition titled, "Making It Last: Sustainable Fashion in Victorian America," comparing that earlier practical necessity with today's efforts to support sustainability, as well as less savory fashion history such as poisonous chemicals and worker exploitation.

**Dr. Jason Mancini, executive director at CTH**, notes, "We're excited to support projects that find ways to make history relevant - from fashion, to sustainability, to labor organization, and environmental health. LMMM shows us that history is with us every day as we contextualize trends of the past and help individuals see comparisons and connections to the issues of today."

The grant to the Southington Public Library supports their partnership with Hartford-based Sea Tea Improv to offer comedy workshops and a final performance to diverse community groups and ages this summer. Each event includes exercises and group discussion designed to help participants use improv to examine and decipher daily life and current events, such as COVID and other collective trauma.

"The Southington Public Library understands how difficult the past two plus years have been on its community and the world at large," says **Lynn Pawloski, M.L.S., librarian at Southington Public Library**. "This funding from CT Humanities will allow us to provide thought-provoking, educational programming in a joyful medium all summer long. Participants will learn to evaluate and improve their communication skills, interpret conflicting and confusing information through humor, and create artful meaning while showcasing that our similarities outweigh our differences," continues Pawloski.

Opportunities to apply for a Quick Grant from CT Humanities exist throughout the year. For more information on eligibility and application due dates, visit [cthumanities.org/grants/quick-grants](https://cthumanities.org/grants/quick-grants).

### **About CT Humanities**

[CT Humanities](https://cthumanities.org) (CTH) is an independent, nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. CTH promotes civic engagement and connects people to the humanities through

grants, partnerships, and collaborative programs. CTH projects, administration, and program development are supported by state and federal matching funds, community foundations, and gifts from private sources.